

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Three minutes.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Is there anyone right after Senator Beutler?

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Two speakers, Senator.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Okay. Senator Beutler, I will try to do it in a short period of time and then I will put my light on here, and see if I can finish it for you because I was going to save it for opening. But since you raised the question, I will begin to do so. Understand what this is not, this is not a constitutional convention. There are those who would like to raise that boogeyman and say that is true, but it is not. What this is is the beginning of a formal communication with Congress through a document that is going to be called a States' Petition. Now does that petition mean a petition that has a legal force that you and I know under the Nebraska Constitution? No, it does not. What it is is a formal communication, though not legally binding, to communicate from the states to Congress that we believe the erosion of states' rights and balance of federalism as we thought it should be has begun to go the wrong direction. So what this is designed to do is to have this conference, that is not dominated by partisan politics, not dominated by special interests, because both of those issues will kill this conference, but for them to get together and come back and put together a list of things that the states believe to be necessary to tell Congress, look, leave us alone, let us do what we think is correct. We are the institutions that, basically, govern people in the day-to-day lives. Will there be possible things to amend the Constitution? Perhaps that is some of the recommendations, but understand that the Conference of the States can't do that. Because you know under Article V in the United States Constitution, that to call a constitutional convention or to make those changes, you must either have Congress initiate a constitutional amendment,...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: ...or have two-thirds of the states ask Congress to call a constitutional convention, and from there on, if there is such a convention, then those things must come back to the states for ratification, and that they actually will petition Congress for what we need. The Conference of the States I believe to be similar to a convocation, a convocation